



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Edward Campos, Interim Director, Small and Minority Business Resources Department.

DATE: January 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Disparity Study Procurement

This memo serves to update Mayor and Council on the procurement to contract with a consultant to conduct a new disparity study for the Small and Minority Business Resources Department (SMBR). At the January 23, 2020 City Council meeting, staff will bring forward a Recommendation for Council Action to contract with Colette Holt & Associates to conduct a new disparity study.

As you may recall, at the December 13, 2018 Austin City Council meeting, SMBR brought forward for City Council consideration a request to contract with Colette Holt & Associates to conduct the disparity study. City Council postponed this item and directed staff to conduct stakeholder meetings in January 2019 for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed scope of work for the disparity study. Staff scheduled meetings at a variety of times and locations to provide multiple opportunities for stakeholders to attend a session. The meetings times for these sessions were:

- Monday, January 14, 2019 – 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers – 301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
- Thursday, January 24, 2019 – 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Carver Branch Library – 1161 Angelina St., Austin, TX 78702
- Wednesday, January 30, 2019 - 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center – 600 River St., Austin, TX 78701

In addition to those sessions, SMBR attended the African American Resource Advisory Commission, LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission, Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission, and Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission at their January 2019 meetings in an effort to capture additional stakeholder input.

The draft scope of work for the disparity study was published on SMBR's website at www.austintexas.gov/snbr. Stakeholders who were unable to attend these meetings were able to send comments to: SMBRDisparityStudy@austintexas.gov. Additionally, the first stakeholder session was recorded by ATXN and was linked to SMBR's website.

Once the stakeholder meetings were conducted, and based on stakeholder input, staff decided the best course of action was to cancel the RCA requesting a contract with Colette Holt & Associates and instead embark on a formal competitive solicitation process. That formal competitive solicitation process commenced in the late summer of 2019 and resulted in the City receiving proposals from three national firms to conduct the study. After the evaluations of the proposals that were submitted, the evaluation panel (comprised of representatives from SMBR, the Capital Contracting Office, the Equity Office, and Law) is recommending that City Council award a contract to Colette Holt & Associates.

The MBE/WBE Small Business Enterprise Procurement Program Advisory Committee have been briefed on a monthly basis throughout this process and is scheduled to act on this recommendation at their January 7, 2020 meeting.

We anticipate that the study will take twelve months to complete. In that time, the selected consultant will meet with city staff from the SMBR, Purchasing Office and Capital Contracting Office to review contracting data from 2013 to 2018. The selected consultant will also conduct a series of workshops and other outreach efforts with stakeholders (prime firms, subcontractors, minority trade alliance members, Austin minority chambers of commerce and various trade associations) to gather anecdotal data which will become a part of the completed study.

The current MBE/WBE Ordinance sunsets in March 2020. In order to accommodate the disparity study timeline, an Ordinance amendment will be brought to Council in February 2020 to extend the sunset date by an additional two years. This will accommodate the completion of the study, stakeholder feedback on the draft study prior to staff taking the completed study for City Council adoption and will also allow staff time to include recommendations and suggested changes to our MBE/WBE Ordinance and Rules to be considered by City Council.

If you have any questions related to the disparity study process, please contact me at 512.974.7206.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
Anne Morgan, City Attorney
James Scarboro, Purchasing Officer
Tamela Saldana, Compliance Officer
Ron Pigott, Assistant City Attorney IV